



**We want YOU
to submit to
THE OMEN**

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Staff Box: (In order of appearance)

Ida: I was fuckin' busy man. I just shut down.

Finn: Suffered

Emily: Regretted my continuing state of consciousness.

Sarah-Marie: Struggled to put my life together.

Will: Mmm. Tomatoes.

Olivia: My social life has been poppin'.
Can't get the boys offa me.

Front Cover: Ida Kao

Back Cover: Ida Kao

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in any format (no PDFs please) by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, FedEx, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, the Omen Office or Ida's mailbox (1240).

Policy

The Omen is a bimonthly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: **we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous.** Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fanfiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. **Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of The Omen, the Omen editrix, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.**

Anyone can submit to the Omen, but you can also become Omen staff! Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for meetings, which usually takes place every Thursday night in the basement of Merrill B (past the laundry room); the only permanent position is that of editrix. You should come and answer the staff question. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on every other Thursday in Saga, the post office, online at <http://expelallo.men>, and just about any other place we can find to put it.

THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIKU:

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

EDITORIAL

Ida Kao

The Omen Infrequently Asked Questions

Another year, another horde of angry sheep to feed! The sheep thankfully understand that content will be a bit short this year, so get ready for Omen-Lite! After the influx of new submissions after HampFest, it is probably important for any new readers and prospective submitters to have some questions answered. Not that I have been asked many of these questions, admittedly, hence why these are Infrequently Asked Questions!

Q1. Do I need to attend a meeting in order to submit content?

A1. No. You just need to email your submission to omen@hampshire.edu (Word doc or plain text preferred for text-based submissions). You can also text it to (540) 750-997, or mail it to Box 1240. If you would still like to come, meetings are every Thursday in the Merrill B basement (past the laundry room) starting at 7:00 p.m., and issues are published once every two weeks. They are typically distributed across campus on Mondays. Digital copies can be found on The Omen's HampEngage page and on the Daily Digest/Intranet.

Q2. I can never find copies of The Omen around campus! What do I do?

A2. The Omen has always been uploaded to our HampEngage page and posted on the Daily Digest. Past issues of The Omen can be found by searching through the Intranet. Most of our pre-2016 issues can be found at <http://bork.hampshire.edu/~omen/> and <http://expelallo.men>

Q3. I don't see my submission in the latest issue of The Omen! Where is it?

A3. There is a very good chance your submission did not make it in for one of three reasons. No, none of those reasons is because The Omen disagrees with you. 1) You did not submit by the deadline (generally the Friday of the latest Omen Layout meeting; check HampEngage for dates) and it will probably appear in the issue after it. 2) The person doing layout (me) is kind of a dumbass and may not check the Omen email frequently enough before publishing, or she may have deleted something in order to

arrange the pages in a more space efficient manner and forgotten to put it back in. 3) If it's a special edition, such as the erotica issue (around Valentine's Day) or the NEMO (produced under the discretion of MICHAEL ZIMM THE BEST EDITRIX OF THE NEMO EVER), your submission may not have made it in because it did not fit the theme of that particular issue. This is particularly important for the color issue in the spring, because printing in color costs a lot of money and text-heavy submissions are typically not very colorful.

Q4. I am an alum, staff person, or faculty member of Hampshire College. Can I submit to The Omen?

A4. Are you a member of the Hampshire community? (Hint: Yes. The answer is yes.) If you belong to one of the latter two groups, you are strongly discouraged from submitting bad erotica, fanfiction of students you think would make a great couple, erotica of any quality about students you think would make a great couple, or anything directly related to grievances about your job. Use common sense, y'know?

Q5. Why are anonymous and/or libelous submissions not allowed?

Q5. The latter rule is probably pretty obvious; The Omen does not want to get sued. It's just hungry for submissions, goddammit! A lawsuit would leave it very hungry because it would no longer be fed dank memes. If The Omen were to allow anonymous submissions, it would probably be fed more content. Unfortunately, that also means a lot of hateful submissions would appear and with no way to hold submitters accountable by releasing their names, it would be bad for The Omen to allow them.

Q6. I don't like that [person] keeps submitting a bunch of [stuff] to The Omen! The Omen is so full of [stuff] and I'm tired of it! What can be done about this?

A6. Lucky for you, there is a very simple solution to your grievances. Submit your own work to The Omen!

Q7. I don't like that [person] submitted [stuff] to The Omen that said [opinion]!

Q7. The Omen does not endorse the views expressed by [person]. In fact, The Omen professes to not have any stance on anything submitted by anyone, for any reason. We are here to give everyone in the Hampshire community a platform to express their opinion!

Now submit! And remember, The Omen loves you.

SECTION SPEAK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ED WINGENBACH

Submitted by Olivia Krzeminski and Will Newhall

We interviewed the new president of Hampshire to introduce him to the community and give him an Omen-style welcome. [edited for clarity]

Will: Thank you for sitting down for an interview with us, Mr. President.

Ed: Ed, please

Will: Alright. We'll start off with the most serious question of all: which Japanese Kit Kat flavor are you?

Olivia: Wait that's my question! So, which Japanese Kit-Kat flavor would you be: green tea, sweet potato, grape, pumpkin pudding, or wasabi?

E: I would be wasabi. My son loves the green tea.

W: That's exciting. I've actually never had any of these so I don't know...

E: For Christmas my son wanted Japanese flavored Kit-Kats. I have a 10 year old and a 13 year old I know what Japanese Kit-Kats are.

W: Oh, are these like a popular thing that- damn.

O: Get with pop culture, Will.

W: Clearly. Next question, what is your take on the board's current fundraising goals and plans to reopen admission in 2020?

E: Well, there are plans to reopen admissions and 2020 readmissions are open, we have applications and people have applied. I think it's vital that we admit students. If we don't admit students in 2020, and we really should, we are done. We're not planning to teach out Hampshire College or let somebody buy our property. My vision of the board's plan to admit students in 2020 is what would have been a precondition of my coming here to be the president. Hampshire has to stay open. We're continuing to evaluate where we are right now. The fundraising goals are to raise about \$9 million dollars between now and June to fill the gap between our current expenditure and our current revenues. We've raised about nine [million] since the beginning of January in cash and pledges, which is about three times what Hampshire normally raises in a year. So that suggests a lot of promise there. And there are a lot of people who have means to support Hampshire, in our supporters and our alumni, and people who care about Hampshire. If we can persuade them that what we're doing is

viable, and that there's a practical, reasonable future from here to the Hampshire College of 2025 or so, I think they will be very happy to support us.

O: As a student, that's concerning because, like, \$9 million is just a lot and I don't know... is it do-able?

E: It's do-able. You have to remember, Hampshire College has been operating at a fairly significant deficit for several years, they just haven't been talking about it very much. So I had to go out and find various sources of income to fill those gaps.

W: Is that normal for a liberal arts college our particular size for us to be in serious debt right now?

E: Yeah, to be unbalanced, I think it is not uncommon. There are a lot of colleges, residential colleges,... that are struggling to figure out how to make their ends meet. I can think of 10 or 15 of them off the top of my head that are really struggling to figure out how to make this model work. And most of them are worse off than Hampshire... Hampshire has a distinctive and interesting thing to offer students, and there are people who want to come here, and most of the other colleges are sort of indistinguishable generic residential colleges. The only thing they can compete on is price. So they're all competing with one another to get more students and they each get less students, and each year they get less money, and then each year you spend more to get those students and so it's a kind of a national dilemma for colleges like ours. Although I'd rather be here than in most of those other colleges, since we do something that's valuable and worthwhile and exciting.

W: All right, so next very serious and sincere question that, you know, clearly defines world issues. Would you rather fight one horse sized duck or 100 duck sized horses?

E: Probably one duck-sized horse, because I think ducks are just not terribly aggressive. I think the duck wouldn't really realize how big it is and still be afraid of me whereas 100 duck sized horses could do some damage.

W: You do realize horses are also prey animals, right?

E: Yeah, but they can be really aggressive. 100 duck sized horses are gonna trample you! Now if it were a goose rather than a duck, I might pick the 100 duck-sized horses.

W: What do you think is the best way to better sustain Hampshire's finances in the future?

E: I think the first thing we have to do is figure out how to not spend as much money as we've been spending. If you look at the trends at Hampshire's interest budgets, the amount that Hampshire spends has been slightly going up, and the amount of money received has been slightly going down. And you can do that for a little while. At some point though, you've got to reevaluate how you spend your money and what you spend it on. Now, that is particularly urgent and unavoidable to do when your revenues are cut by a third or more, which is what happens if you don't take a class. We have to figure out how to match our expenditures: What do we invest in our students and in the student experience, to the revenues that we can actually count on? And there are a lot of creative ways one can answer that question. A lot of the work we're going to do this fall is to figure out how exactly can

we do that, in a way that maintains the core of a Hampshire College experience. Advantages that Hampshire has is that the mission of Hampshire College 50 years ago was explicitly: you've got to figure out a way to deliver an excellent, rigorous, high-quality education in a way that is manageable on tuition and some other predictable revenue streams. If we can't figure out how to do that, all the liberal arts colleges are going to go away except for the 25 or so that have lots and lots of money.

O: Aside from keeping the college open, obviously, are there other issues on campus that you feel strongly about or are hoping to address?

E: Yeah, there are a couple of ones that have come up in almost every single conversation that I've had with faculty, staff, students, and alums. Everybody who's affiliated with Hampshire College are deeply concerned about two things about the culture of Hampshire college: One, the isolation a lot of students seem to feel. That's something we can probably, and should, be thinking about addressing, as we're trying to imagine how to rethink the core of what we have our students do in ways that would allow them to work together more as they think about problems. As you think about questions, and you try to impact the world, are there ways that we can help students learn and practice collaboration, that might also help them feel less isolated, but also might help us build community with students? And maybe excite people about the opportunity to work together to solve some big problems. So that's one thing that's come up. The other thing that I've heard a lot is a concern that there is a kind of culture of intolerance amongst students, with a peer to peer sort of expectation that there's a certain range of beliefs and identities and views of the world that are considered acceptable or ideal, and that people who stray from those are not considered dissidents, but sort of excluded... I think that's something I'd like to help us think about differently. I don't know how I would do that as the president, but it's something I'm concerned about.

W: Alrighty, then. Are there still going to be faculty and staff layoffs?

E: I don't know. I mean, given that salary and benefits is the bulk of our revenue, figuring out how to match revenue to expenses in a reasonable way... This probably impacts how many faculty, staff, and administrators we can have. But there are ways to think through that, that don't necessarily mean letting people go. So for example, we have a whole lot of faculty who are on leave or are doing different kinds of creative things right now. That's made a big difference for this year. I don't know what creative solutions we might see.

W: What is one issue of global concern that you feel strongly about?

E: Only one? Okay, the one I feel strongest about, because I think it drives most of the others, is the massive and continuing concentration of wealth and power, both at the national scales, but then, at global scales, if you think of increasing concentrations of wealth in the United States, where more and more goes to fewer and fewer people... There is more and more control and power, which has all kinds of nasty impacts on our educational system, on our environment, on our ability to govern ourselves, and our ability to have a just society. But then that's sort of reproduced internationally. Then on the national scale, while the United States is essentially the equivalent of that top one quarter of 1% that is sucking up all of the resources in the United States and we're just doing it to the rest of the world. Also most of the other big problems like global climate change and migration and the rise of nationalism and all that is, I think, driven by that fundamental injustice.

W: So you mentioned censorship on campus and what's acceptable and what's not. So do you have any plans to address this issue?

E: I wouldn't use the word censorship. I think I said censorious, which is more of a tone, that sense of maybe the aspiration to censor without the power, although I guess socially people have the power to censor. Maybe censoring is good, I don't know. Right now, I don't have a plan to try to address it because I don't know enough about how it functions here... I haven't had a chance to figure out how the President can have an impact on that apart from modeling for people, how to have an open conversation and disagree with people with civility. so that's a hard one because I'm certainly not a free speech absolutist right? There are things that we probably shouldn't be talking about or saying. While we want to have a wide range of opinions and people who are comfortable expressing them, we're also a college. Part of being a college is that we pursue knowledge and we pursue wisdom. There are certain things that we can kind of rule out. If somebody wants to come and tell us that the world is flat, we don't really have to let them. It's not going to do any harm but we don't have to invite somebody to campus to give a lecture on why the world is really flat.

W: Well if you want to send in diverse opinions, Submit to the Omen! Now let's see. TV or movies?

E: TV. The TV is not hooked up yet at the president's house so we're watching things on Netflix. I'm trying to watch this series Dark, a German series. So far, I'm about four episodes in and it's as weird and twisted as I expected. I love science fiction and kind of intellectually engaged playing with concepts like time and identity.

O: How do you plan to continue to involve students in decision making around the future of Hampshire?

E: I was just working on this letter that I'm sending out tomorrow morning, to remind people that we're having this series of weekly meetings to talk about the future of Hampshire and specifically to talk about how we should think about the models of how we deliver Hampshire student experience. There've been people with lots of ideas talking for years now, and various visioning and planning exercises, that never really stepped into making decisions. And you know, now given the choices that were made last spring, we now have to make some decisions, to make some choices. And so the first step of that is that, every Sunday, seven o'clock at the West Lecture Hall, open meeting for students to participate in and get feedback on this emergent process. There's another meeting on Monday morning for staff, Tuesday afternoon for faculty. So the answer for the immediate question is, here are eight models to families of concepts that have emerged and all these people that want to think about. Which of them seem terrible, which of them seem attractive, are there things that can be combined, are there things we're missing, and we'll have that conversation across those three groups and then get a smaller group that will summarize those conversations. It looks like we're heading in this direction. This is what we heard from these groups. Now the next week, let's start there and keep going.

The idea behind that process is that we can't sit down with everybody who cares about Hampshire and go and have a vote on what we're going to do. In part because you wouldn't end up with informed decisions, but in part because ultimately, it's the Board of Trustees and faculty who are empowered to make those choices. What I am hopeful will happen is that as we have these conversations, it will become clear what narrower range of options enthruse people, excite them, or

at least feel like they can live with what decision is made by the faculty and the sense of what the roadmap for a curriculum we're willing to go build, and the board says this is a model that we will then financially support, that everybody else who was part of this conversation can say, I feel like that feels reasonable to me. So that's the immediate one. I also have open office hours for students to come in and talk to me that's 8:30 to 10 on Wednesdays, planning to be as accessible as I can possibly be given other obligations. I want to make sure that I have dinner, over at the Commons a couple times a semester...

O: Are there any courses available this semester you wish you could take?

E: You know, I haven't had a chance to look carefully at the courses. I'm an awful president... Actually, that's not true. There's a course... about rivers and culture that seems really interesting. Basically, you pick a river and you get environmental issues, and then you get political issues and you get issues of cultural conflict. It's a really nice model [for a course].

W: What is the best vacation you have ever been on?

E: In 2010, I lead, with another faculty member, an alumni trip to Greece. One of my interests is classics, and particularly Ancient Greece. This was an alumni trip for the Johnston Center, which is this Hampshire equivalent in the University of Redlands, where I spent most of my first 15 years as a faculty member... And so we took, like, thirty-five alums from the Johnson Center- which as you can imagine, are very much like Hampshire alums, just, you know, curious and excited and interesting and idiosyncratic- and we spent ten days traveling around Athens and the Peloponnese, and I'm going out to Colossus and Crete, and everywhere we went, [we were] reading the philosophers and the poets and the literature of ancient Greece and having conversations about it, and we're doing history and we were doing philosophy and political theory and art criticism, and it was really fun. So, I wish every vacation was sort of an extended education tour, and the weather was fabulous and Greece is beautiful and the food is great.

W: Have you ever taken part in a protest of any kind, why or why not? And what was it for?

E: I have, I was fairly active in political protesting when I was and undergraduate and graduate school. I went to graduate school of Notre Dame, so, you know, conservative Catholic place in a conservative state. It was that time in the early 90s. This was when Operation Rescue was active, just straight up blockade abortion clinics. Because of that a lot of work went into protecting abortion clinics from aggressive people who were trying to shut them down. I was also active at Notre Dame and trying to get Notre Dame to recognize the gay/lesbian organization, which of course they didn't want to do. I guess I went to a Catholic place for graduate school, I should have expected that they would, but I didn't want them to. So I did a lot of work there, and I was also active again in working in the graduate school unionization movement, which was at that point a live issue about whether graduate students at private institutions were employees or not. The argument that colleges were making was, well, they're not employees, they are apprentices, they're students, even though they're doing all the teaching and the grading and the work. They're not really employees, and so they can't organize. And so I did some work with a national organization that was trying to coordinate across various campuses. It's still an issue, it's not entirely resolved about whether graduate students who do work are actually employees or not, and whether they can unionize or not. Columbia, I think, was just

trying to break their union.

W: So what do you like to do in your time off?

E: Think about what to do with my job. No [just kidding]. Well, right now with the time off that I've had, I'm trying really hard to spend it with my kids and with my spouse, because I'm not seeing them a whole lot. I'm spending a lot of time away and when I am there, I'm often up in the office working so, it's the weekend, with my son I'm bike riding and spending some time with my daughter and wandering around in the prairie, the conservancy behind the house, so mostly stuff with the kids. And then I'm trying to find some time to exercise; it's been harder to carve out time to but I'd do more of that.

W: What is one issue or concern that you feel strongly about?

E: Well, I already talked about about concentrations of wealth. This is a small one but... actually, I'm really worried about the problem of over-prosecution and the really bad trends in criminal discretion. This idea that the ways in which decisions are made, about who to prosecute and when to prosecute are so deeply guided by peoples'... assumptions about race and about class that you end up with these really massive disparities in who's prosecuted and sentenced. It's made much worse by the fact that almost nobody ever goes to trial. Something like 3% of people ever go to a trial because most of what the judicial system is about now is threatening people with draconian, horrible outcomes if they don't agree to a plea bargain, so that nobody has to actually examine the underlying evidence. And when you call them to jury duty, basically your job is to sit there as a threat. [The prosecution then says] if you don't give into this in light and smaller thing, we're going to throw a bunch of other stuff at you. And that's so wildly uneven in the way that's done and the way it's pursued, I think that's something that it would be nice to change. And there's some progress in there. I mean, there's been some real justice in movement that I think has been effective and helpful continue to be for people, progressive prosecutors running for office. Explicitly on a platform of not "I'm going to lock everybody up", but "I'm going to try to not lock everybody up, try to move people into diversionary programs or find people who shouldn't be in jail and let them out". It's a really important national issue and it's[not getting enough attention].

W: The last and arguably most important question of this whole thing is: do you think The Omen could be a good world leader? More specifically, if the Omen signers were made into the monarchs of the world, would you be confident in their abilities?

O: You should answer honestly to this. [laughter]

E: Well, I assume that what The Omen signers would immediately do is tell the world that they're not really in charge, and, you know, they're just a just a sovereignty collective that's here to let you express yourselves... Given the other alternatives for global tyrants, I think that'd be a pretty good one. If I've gotta have a global tyrant, I'd like to see ones who were self reflective and seem not to want to have any authority.

W: All right. Well, that is the end. Thank you so much for your time.

A big thank you to Richard Stempel, aka “The key guy of Hampshire College,” for replacing the Omen office’s lockbox!

Submitted by Ida Kao (at the request of John Wildman)



“Chloe-balism feat. Chloe’s Popsicle and Chloe Omelchuck”
Submitted by: Ida Kao



Finian
Submitted by: Finian Scott

SECTION LIES

Humorous Hampshire Horoscope New Year

By Will Newhall

Aries: You will be mentally and morally challenged in regards to the New School Year. Then you will read the Omen and feel relaxed.

TAURUS: YOU HATE HOROSCOPES, THAT'S WHY YOU READ THEM. YOU HAVE A HATE-LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH HOROSCOPES.

Gemini: You will look at unsolicited dog pics. They're so cute!!!

CANCER: YOU WILL WANT TO HAVE A GOOD MEAL WITH FRIENDS. THEN YOU'LL REMEMBER YOU DON'T HAVE ANY.

Leo: You are an arrogant ass. You humble dick wad. Your humility is your most redeeming quality. If you had a redeeming quality.

VIRGO: YOU WILL INVOLUNTARILY GAIN THE ATTENTION OF THE ROOM. YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. EVERYONE IS STARING AT YOU NOW. CONGRATULATIONS.

Libra: You gotta go outside buddy. Like, really. Are you ok?

Scorpio: You're right. Whatever it is. You're right.

Sagittarius: You will take a philosophy class. What is the meaning of life anyway?

Capricorn: You will accidentally join a DnD group. Congratulations. You nerd.

Aquarius: That Sagittarius seems suspicious. They seem... smart.

Pisces: You... Can't... Trust... Leo...

Write It

By Chelsea Ellsworth

Write it.
Write it.
Write it down, now.

Do this! Before someone else does.
Write it before you forget and it is lost forever.

Write it. Use a piece of trash if you must.
Use a crayon to unleash your words.

Please, write it; put thought to paper.
I beg you to come out of the shadows
And illuminate this world.

But who am I to tell you to write?
I have kept these words locked in my head for many moons now
Safe, from the judgment of light.

Are your thoughts there too?
Do not do as I do.

Write it.
Write it.
Write it down now.

Free your black & white symphonies from your dark drawer.
Yank open your drawer!
Let the overflowing bills and have to's fall to the floor.

Allow your precious words, tucked away so neatly,
Run wild and free.
Dance with your words,
And allow this chorus to sing you to a new world.

Write it.
Write it.
Write it down now.

It is never too late.
Not the judgment
But the words.

Downs and Ups

By Chelsea Ellsworth

A hangnail

Slivers

Wet socks

Shouting

Low fat, sugar free, diet

Stubbing toes

The dark

Homelessness

Sunburn

Weakness.

The stars

Barns with many windows

Spiral staircases

Unexpected mail from a friend

Busy bird feeders

The first sip

Christmas morning air

Rainbows

A pet greeting your return home

Crickets

Strength.

Introvert

By Chelsea Ellsworth

A swear word to me,

To all those who are quiet and overly polite.

Those that give up their ground

Instead of fighting back.

Those who keep the peace

And sacrifice their comfort for others.

Always giving in,

Eleven times out of ten.

Why create a fuss?

Yes.

Yes, is the default answer.

Of course you can have a ride,

With very little gas.

You may choose when to take my time

In an already busy schedule.

Sure I'll eat there,

Knowing the menu is too expensive.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

All day and sometimes at night.

My break comes with a resounding NO

The best excuse-

My only excuse,

Bedridden by the flu.

Greenhouse

By Chelsea Ellsworth

What happened was unexpected and awful. I should not have been surprised because much of this life has become unexpected and awful. Clover had fallen ill with pneumonia. Instead of fighting back her body was losing the battle.

“Sixty is a good age my dear,” She tells me as I rummage about the studio apartment frantically cleaning. My hands and mind worked together to make the room perfect. Perhaps Clover would recover if our home were tidy again. I had let the indoor chores slip the past few weeks needing to do double duty in the greenhouse and care for the animals.

I crouch in front of the fireplace and add more twigs to the embers. She needs to be warm. It has been nearly impossible to keep her from shivering. Five nights ago I threw my two remaining blankets over her. Now they seem to be doing nothing at all.

“Violet?” she whispers. I stand up and go over to the bed to kneel at her side. Dim in the firelight, her mossy green eyes stare at me and calm my thoughts.

“It is okay to be afraid. It is only natural. But, it is not okay to let fear control your life. You are a strong young woman and I am lucky to have you. Family is sacred, don’t forget to try and create one for yourself someday.”

I never expressed my daydreams of a family. But she could read my mind. Clover had a gift for silent understanding.

“Now,” she sighed. “Could you get me out of this dead brown room? I want to sleep where it is green tonight.”

I obliged and began peeling the layers of bedding off of her. I did not realize how small she had grown. Her appetite has been lost lately. I gently scoop her into my arms with no difficulty. My arms have always been farm workers. I head for the door then out across our land for the tree line. With each step I can feel her bones creak. This is not the Clover I know, not the Clover who raised me.

Only about fifty yards into the woods I could see the greenhouse. I remember being very young and holding a box of nails while she hammered together the window frames. She had salvaged them from old abandoned buildings with her long time friend Rita.

There’s plenty of room inside being about eight by sixteen feet. It is always warm in here. There are shelves upon shelves of herbs, flowers, veggie sprouts, succulents and ferns. I walk towards the other end and set Clover down on one of the two-chaise lounge chairs. Then walk back to the door and close it to keep the heat in.

Pushing the two chaise chairs together I lay down next to her wrapping my arm over her ribs and nuzzled my head under her arm.

“Much better.” She whispered.

The sun was peeking through the trees when I woke up. Clover and I hadn’t moved all night. That’s when I realized, Clover wasn’t moving at all. I just laid there closing my eyes wishing I could go with her.

Working in the Greenhouse

By Chelsea Ellsworth

Clover and I were working in the greenhouse. She would hand me a cup or can of dirt and I would bury a seed beneath the surface. This was our assembly line of planting future winter vegetables. Then I would take a full tray and water it before placing them on a shelf. Rita interrupted our concentration when she entered the greenhouse in a hurry bringing in a cool current of air as she shut the door behind her.

“They’ve raided the McCormick’s home late last night.” She informs Clover without a hello or how are you.

Clover listened silently as Rita divulged the details.

“The bastards barged in while they were all sleeping. Mr. McCormick tried to fight them off, you know how strong willed he is. The SWAT team had the upper hand of course. He had too many heat lamps on his crops! The helicopters spotted it from a mile away! The poor fool. Now he is critically injured and his family is without. These raids I tell you, they’re happening more and more, things are changing and not for the good Clover.”

Clover’s response was to reach into her fanny pack and pull out a small bag of squash seeds. “Here, give these to his family.”

An appropriate response I thought. All of the neighbors will help the McCormicks any way they can with food and gardening materials. But it had to be inconspicuous or more trouble will happen.

“Yes, that’s all well and good Clover but what about this greenhouse of yours? I know it is in the trees but it is bound to be found out one of these days.”

“I have been thinking that over.” Clover nodded. “It seems I can’t cover it completely because the plants need the sun, but I can’t risk a glare if there is a flyover. I’m going to have to tie up a screen in the trees over the greenhouse. Hopefully that will reduce its visibility as well as allow enough sun in for everything to thrive still. Plus, these trees still have some leaves on them for coverage, hopefully they develop and more will grow.”

“You’re too optimistic.” said Rita. The leaves aren’t going to grow back. It’s not like it was when we were kids Clover. Those days are over, Mother Nature is getting her revenge whether we exist or not. I think she prefers, not.”

“You’re wrong on this one Rita. Look around you, where you’re standing. Mother Nature is here. We are on her side fighting back and trying to make the world greener again. Now that we are not harming her, she will come back.”

“Not if the raids keep up.” Rita scowled, but not at Clover, just at how the world was turning these days.

“Please tell the McCormick’s on mine and Violet’s behalf that we are so sorry for what happened last night. I hope Mr. McCormick recovers. We would go ourselves but we have so much more to do here.”

Rita turned to leave and sent a quick smile in Violet’s direction.

Mr. McCormick would succumb to his wounds by the time Rita handed over the sympathy seeds that afternoon.

Autumn

By Finian Carver Scott

My toes curl into the solid dirt, pressing prints into a ground already veiled by a layer of frost. The chilled wind curls through my hair, up my skirt, and finally scatters through the swaying wheat. Everything steps into beat, all following my gentle lead.

My partner in this slow waltz hangs loosely against my arms, hay scratching, digging into my skin. His ever-present smile mocks me as every step, every bounce, every turn cuts me deeper, but his mockery is a familiar comfort.

Why do you dance with me?

You're the only one who knows the steps.

I cannot dance with you, my only purpose is to scare away the birds.

You're the only one who will dance with me.

Aren't you lonely?

Yes

So, why do you come back?

What choice do I have?

His head lulls onto my neck, and I close my eyes, continuing to twirl to the sounds of the leaves, the sounds of the mice, the sounds of the crows, the sounds of the wheat.

Who will you dance with when fall is over?

I won't dance when fall is over.

What about the boys in town, won't they dance with you?

I don't want to dance with the boys in town.

Why not?

They don't know the steps.

A deep pink started on the horizon, swirling upwards through the clouds until oranges and yellows began to shine through the wheat.

I suppose this is goodbye for the night.

I suppose.

Will you be back tomorrow?

If there is no frost.

And if there is frost?

I will see you again next August then.

I placed my partner back on his stand, giving him a final curtsy before carefully navigating back through the tall rows of wheat. Gently opening the screen door to my father's ranch house, I crept up the stairs; careful to avoid loose wooden panels. And with a runny, glowing nose I slipped under the cotton sheets, just in time to hear my father creak passed my bedroom door, and down to the kitchen to make his coffee with two sugar cubes and only a splash of cream.

Section Hate

3:00 a.m. Ramblings

Submitted by: Ida Kao

I think we all wish to forget the train wreck that was the spring semester of 2019 at Hampshire College. To some extent, I actually did forget what I wrote in *The Omen* last year. I may have even written a poorly thought out screed against HampRiseUp very late at night and put it in the editorial. I'm just going to assume the worse of myself and say yes I absolutely did that. My current self is retching internally at the thought. The position of editrix is pretty ill-defined, and I take the position with an amusing degree of solemnity for a publication that churns out innuendo-laden stories out for Valentine's Day. I certainly shouldn't have used it as a bully pulpit to preach my beliefs, even if they were right. (As it turns out, they were very wrong.) And right now, I write this in my role as editrix, but not as a representative of *The Omen*. Indeed, I am unsure of how to define the limits of the editrix, not like my definition isn't capable of being flouted as soon as I step down. Should the editorial speak as one and the same as the views of *The Omen*? Traditionally, that's what the editorial is; the people who make up the newspaper speak together on its behalf. Of course, as I seem to have forgotten last year, *The Omen* has no opinion. It is a platform for free speech, and the total lack of editorial control over its submissions makes the purpose of the editorial seem silly. So, the editorial compares to a newspaper editorial only in name, certainly not in purpose. Nonetheless, keeping the editorial as free from politics, campus, local, state, etc., is my stated goal from this point on.

Of course, what exactly constitutes staff is actually even murkier. What about the person that walked in and remarked that they were wondering where *The Omen* office is, only to make a quick exit when a staff member informed them that stepping foot inside made them staff? They certainly had not answered the Staff Question or had the answer put in the Staff Box, the former of which is not exactly a tough one to answer. Clearly they were not a fan of *The Omen*, and yet they were staff that night!

But I digress. The real kicker was this, excerpted from President Edward Wingenbach's August 30th letter about the release of the records concerning the negotiation with UMass:

These public records also reveal new information. First, they suggest that UMass and Hampshire leaders discussed last December that one potential condition of being acquired by UMass was

Hampshire not accepting a fall 2019 class. Second, internal UMass communications indicate that UMass leaders envisioned one scenario in which Hampshire would close after a teach-out period, and that any successor UMass entity would not be required to continue Hampshire's mission or educational program.

Importantly, Hampshire's Board of Trustees never endorsed a partnership with UMass on these, or any other, terms. If Hampshire entered into any partnership with these conditions, we would have given up our autonomy, control, and identity.


In short, Hampshire College would've been fucked to high heaven. And while I don't think I should have avoided criticizing HampRiseUp for their missteps, and don't particularly care about revisiting nor apologizing for it, because I think for the most part it's valid, it's not like I was giving the same treatment to the bigwigs that dragged us into this mess in the first place. As I've sought to clarify what The Omen (a platform for speech) and what it is not (an entity with any kind of opinion that reflects the submissions it publishes for the Hampshire community), it's pretty clear that I was wrong. I was wrong to trust Mim, and Gloria Lopez, and Gaye Hill, and Kim Saal, and whatever other greedy bastards wanted to be absorbed into this unrecognizable beast that UMass and Chancellor Subbaswamy wanted to turn the college in to. I don't think there's any qualifications, any "and" or "but" to throw in there. It's just me admitting that I was wrong, and I'm sorry for that.

I don't want to go on a cute little spiel about how I acted wasn't me, or how I deserve forgiveness, or whatever it is that Instagram and YouTube influencers do in a pathetic attempt to keep their follower/subscriber count up while not actually giving a real apology. Clearly it is, or at the very least, was me. There's no way of getting around that. I also am not really asking for forgiveness. It's cool and all, but as a third-generation atheist who can't really let go of grudges myself, I don't have any compelling reason to think God will smote me into a pile of ash if I don't ask for any. Of course, it's not like The Omen needs followers, subscribers, or whatever other means of validation in order to keep existing. Really, it exists so long as Hampshire College exists and at least one student at said college is willing to put in the work and drudgery of layout until 3:00 a.m. on the day it's supposed to go to print. (That day is September 23, 2019, by the way.) For now, that person is me. I abused that willingness as a way to elevate my opinion, when really it was not my place to be doing so at all. Of course, it's not like anyone is holding me accountable and its not to say I won't do it again beyond the ire of my fellow students, but that's the problem with any unstructured organization, isn't it? It's up to the unelected person in charge (of layout, which is admittedly not that much to be in charge of) to do something. I can't really promise anything, unless you count my word, which is probably not too trustworthy at that point. I guess the best I can do is ask you to submit to The Omen.

SUBMIT! Fall '19

~~9/20~~

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 10/18

11/1 


11/15

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